



GUINEA'S COMMERCIAL GATEWAY

AUTONOMOUS PORT OF CONAKRY
SUPPLY CHAIN



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Activities at Guinea's main commercial port are regulated, monitored, and controlled by the Autonomous Port of Conakry, whose Managing Director, Biro Diallo, discusses its strategic location and investments to improve performance

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As the primary commercial port in Guinea, the Port of Conakry plays a leading role in the national economy.

90 percent of foreign trade in the West African country is carried out at the port, whose services include handling, towing, mooring, and ship security.

The Port of Conakry comprises four main terminals - container, conventional, hydrocarbon, and mining - in addition to an artisanal fishing port. These terminals are granted to private operators who are responsible for making necessary investments in the development of port infrastructure and equipment.

With 13 berths

ranging from depths of -9 to -13 metres (m) and a basin that can accommodate drafts of -10m at low tide, the port therefore has a diverse client base as it is capable of receiving all types of vessels, including container and roll-on/roll-off (Ro-Ro) ships carrying goods such as rice, sugar, wheat, oil, cement, bauxite, and alumina.

"The vision of the Port of Conakry is to become a hub in the West African subregion, where the market is very competitive with the presence of several ports in the Gulf of Guinea," outlines Biro Diallo, Managing Director of the port authority - the Autonomous Port of Conakry (APC).

"We are working to improve the quality of our offerings and infrastructure through major investment," he adds.

ADVANTAGEOUS LOCATION

Located in the capital and largest city in Guinea, the Port of Conakry's strategy lies in serving hinterland countries without maritime frontage.

Although competition from its West African neighbours is extensive, the port has a comparative advantage as Conakry is located 974 kilometres (km) from Bamako (Mali), 1,183km from Dakar (Senegal), and 1,747km from Abidjan (Ivory Coast).

"To capitalise on this strategic geographical position, we must carry out a commercial attack on the Malian market, which has enormous potential in terms of importing and exporting food, oil, and cotton products," Diallo outlines, citing Mali as one of the world's leading exporters of cotton with 300,000 tonnes (t) harvested every year. ▣



“WE ARE WORKING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR OFFERINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH MAJOR INVESTMENT”

– BIRO DIALLO, MANAGING DIRECTOR, AUTONOMOUS PORT OF CONAKRY



This strategy was materialised with the launch of the first Malian cotton convoy through a commercial protocol, allowing 115,000t of stretch cotton to pass through the Port of Conakry.

“On top of that, we need investments in port, road, and rail infrastructure to reduce administrative, security, and customs processes on the Conakry-Bamako corridor,” adds Diallo.

In terms of sustainable solutions, the Port of Conakry is also expanding

its storage capacity for goods to 500,000 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) by the end of the decade, which will increase the port’s Malian market share.

INVESTING IN PERFORMANCE

Such investments are key to the success of the Port of Conakry, whose container terminal was also granted €500 million of funding in 2011 by French conglomerate, Bolloré.

This has allowed the port to

acquire 12 rubber-tyred gantries (RTGs) as well as two quay gantries on rails, increasing the capacity for handling goods to a rate of 60 containers per hour.

The investment has also been put towards rehabilitating a 270m quay, constructing a 340m linear quay built to depths of -13m, and developing 24,000 square metres (sqm) of land to increase the Port of Conakry’s storage capacity.

“These investments have improved the performance of the port in terms



of loading and unloading rates,” Diallo claims.

A six-hectare extension of the western zone of the Port of Conakry has also increased port traffic and congestion at the container terminal.

Elsewhere, structuring projects are underway at the conventional terminal, managed by Turkish multinational conglomerate, the Albayrak Group, who granted USD\$500 million of investment into the Port of Conakry in 2018.

The works being carried out concern public lighting, the development and construction of quays and open land, acquisition of two cranes with a capacity of 120t, and construction of a 4.2km penetrating road and parking lot for 1,200 trucks and related services.

“These large-scale projects are likely to improve our attractiveness and service offering to port users in order to make the Port of Conakry a competitive port in the subregion,” states Diallo. ▣

AFRICA OUTLOOK: WHY IS THE INDUSTRY BOOMING IN GUINEA?

Biro Diallo, Managing Director: “The industry in Guinea has been booming for a decade thanks to registered foreign direct investment (FDI). Labour is very affordable, security and justice conditions are met to reassure investors in order to provide capital, and investment and tax laws are competitive and responsive to investor needs.

“A favourable business climate is guaranteed by an investment code that reassures and secures investments. Thanks to all these efforts, Guinea earns points every year in the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business rankings.

“The incentive reforms of the Guinean authorities are also likely to protect public assets through good governance and the fight against corruption.”





Africa Global Logistics: At the Heart of Local Economic Development in Guinea

The subsidiaries of the Africa Global Logistics (AGL) group in Guinea are important players in the provision of logistics, transport, and transit solutions in the country.

With more than 800 employees, 99 percent of whom are nationals, the company's staff base is spread across strategic sites such as Conakry, Kamsar, and Moribaya. AGL Guinea's Conakry Terminal, in particular, contributes to socioeconomic development by investing in the training and supervision of its local teams.

The project is part of a societal policy aimed at supporting the Guinean populations through solidarity initiatives and local development. Alongside its commitments to local content, AGL Guinea promotes the transfer of skills and creates sustainable jobs for the nation's populations. As an organisation, AGL's initiative in Guinea is based around the idea that the development of the local economic fabric is essential to guaranteeing long-term growth.

One of the most notable aspects of this commitment is the recent creation of a joint venture (JV) between AGL Guinea and a national transport company, which combines the in-depth expertise of the country's transport sector with organisational solidity, making it possible to modernise and improve the efficiency of goods transportation.

Approximately 200 jobs have been created for young Guineans, serving an initial fleet of more than 60 trucks. This JV allows its clients to benefit from AGL's international expertise and the recognised local skills of its partner to meet the needs of an increasingly demanding Guinean market.

Thanks to this successful partnership, AGL Guinea will actively involve local players in major logistics operations across key sectors such as mining, agriculture, and industry, whilst also stimulating a transport offering that takes into account the requirements of international investors.

The JV marks a new path that enriches Guinea's logistics sector whilst also ensuring that the wealth generated remains in the national economy.

The Kagbelen Dry Port: Logistics Centre of Excellence for Major Mining Projects

The Kagbelen dry port presents itself as a key element for strengthening Guinea's logistics infrastructure, particularly for the industrial and mining sectors. The Kagbelen site asserts itself as a major strategic project for the economic development of Guinea, playing an essential role in expanding the country's logistical capacities whilst increasing the efficiency of trade.

To better understand this project, we discussed with Emmanuel Masson, General Director of Conakry Terminal, a few points on Kagbelen dry port and the impact it is having on major projects.

Firstly, please could you provide a brief overview of the Kagbelen dry port.

Emmanuel Masson, General Manager of Conakry Terminal (EM): The Kagbelen dry port is an extension of the container and vehicle operations at Conakry Terminal.

Located approximately 35 kilometres from the terminal, the Kagbelen dry port operators have the opportunity to pick up or drop off their containers without having to go to the seaport, benefitting from temporary storage at a low cost. This system aims to relieve congestion at Conakry Terminal while improving the efficiency of trade and logistics activities.

Who are the target audience for the services offered by the Kagbelen dry port and what impact can it have on major projects?

EM: Dry port services are mainly intended for the mining industries, which represent a key sector of

the Guinean economy, as well as companies located in the Kagbelen industrial zone. The dry port therefore makes it possible to store and manage the flow of goods, reducing pressure on the Conakry Terminal whilst facilitating transport to mining areas within the nation and other inland countries.

As key logistical support for large mining projects, the Kagbelen dry port is designed with suitable infrastructure, such as dedicated spaces for storing containers and mining equipment. Its proximity to the country's main roads allows for the rapid movement of goods between Conakry Terminal and the mining sites, thus contributing to the competitiveness of exporting companies and the modernisation of Guinea's infrastructure.

What does the Kagbelen dry port represent to you?

EM: The development of the Kagbelen dry port illustrates a strong commitment to optimising logistics infrastructure and supporting major economic projects in Guinea, with direct benefits for the national economy. Thanks to its vast facilities, the dry port also allows the storage and management of goods flow, thus reducing the pressure exerted on the Conakry Terminal and facilitating operations for economic operators.



Conakry Terminal: From Performance to Economic Growth

The container terminal of the autonomous Conakry Terminal plays a crucial role in the economic transformation of Guinea, strengthening its position as a crossroads of trade in West Africa.

Thanks to major investments made by the subsidiary of AGL, the capacity and efficiency of the terminal have seen notable progress. With the extension of the quays and the acquisition of modern equipment, the Conakry Terminal is now capable of accommodating larger ships, thus increasing the competitiveness of the port on a regional scale.

The project investments are being continued to deploy a second extension of the terminal, currently being implemented, which will double its reception capacity.

This project is about preparing for the future, and the figures speak for themselves: from 269 stopovers recorded, 286,286 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) were handled and 30,681 vehicles unloaded in 2023. We hope to reach 345,000 TEUs and 35,000 vehicles by the end of 2024.

Conakry Terminal is also pursuing an Operational Excellence programme that aims to optimise the management of goods flows both for the benefit of international shipowners and national and regional economic operators. This improvement in performance translates into increased fluidity of



commercial exchanges, as well as a reduction in waiting times for stranded ships. The programme will also increase the port's attractiveness to the world's largest shipowners, who have strengthened their service to Conakry Terminal.

Ultimately, this allows Guinea to benefit from world-class maritime services.

The Conakry Terminal not only serves the country, but also plays a crucial role in regional connectivity, facilitating trade with landlocked countries like Mali and Burkina Faso. This regional dynamic stimulates foreign direct investment, attracted by the efficiency of the port's infrastructure.

In addition, the development of the terminal has a significant impact on the local





economy, particularly in terms of job creation across logistics, transport, and handling, thus contributing to the reduction of unemployment and economic development in the country.

AGL: Leaders in the Field of Logistics and Transport in Guinea

Present in Guinea since the 1990s, AGL Guinea is an essential pillar of the logistics sector that offers a range of strategic services to support the country's trade and economic development.

Its integrated services, which cover multimodal transport (maritime, land and air), customs and administrative solutions, port logistics, as well as supply chain management, enable the company to effectively facilitate trade, both at the national and hinterland level.

With a strong commitment to sustainable development, AGL Guinea places innovation and social responsibility at the heart of its mission. Its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme

aims to strengthen social inclusion in the country by investing in the training of local talents and implementing environmentally-friendly practices. This includes adopting green technologies and promoting multimodal transportation to reduce the company's ecological footprint.

By supporting the creation of efficient transport corridors and participating in key infrastructure projects, such as the development of ports and rail networks, AGL actively contributes to the improvement of logistics infrastructure in Guinea.

Thanks to its expertise, the company positions itself as a key player in meeting the varied logistics needs of its customers and partners, while promoting sustainable economic growth in Guinea.





AFRICA OUTLOOK: HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN SECTOR?

Biro Diallo, Managing Director: “Before taking up my highly strategic position in Guinea’s maritime and port industry, I spent most of my career in mining and quarrying.

“My career started as a civil engineer on construction projects at Laing O’Rourke. I then found myself as Director of Mine Infrastructure at Rio Tinto Iron Ore, where I worked on the pre-feasibility and feasibility phases of the Simandou project, the largest iron deposit in the world.

“After climbing through the ranks as Director of Operations in Guinea, I was promoted to Country Director of Rio Tinto Simfer, before benefitting from the confidence of the interim President of Guinea, Mamady Doumbouya, to assume the duties of Managing Director of APC on 14th December 2021.

“I had the passion to evolve in the public sector after a great experience in the private sector. My goal was to impact the lives of disadvantaged populations and classes, and I think I made the right choice because I feel very fulfilled.”

A PLATFORM FOR PEOPLE

The Port of Conakry constitutes a “real social absorption platform,” according to Diallo, directly employing 6,000 members of staff as well as creating 15,000 indirect jobs.

APC, which Diallo is responsible for leading, has 310 employees – including 164 women – with executives in various specialities such as engineers, lawyers, economists, graphic designers, and security agents.

“As soon as I took office, I initiated institutional reforms to create emulation amongst personnel and define a regulatory framework for the attributions of each workstation,” he tells us.

“The appointment criteria are competence, team spirit, and commitment. I opt for participatory management and give more responsibility to my employees for collegial management.”

Since taking office, Diallo has met

highly motivated employees who are determined to support his initiatives and contribute significantly to the outcomes obtained by the Port of Conakry.

Along with its staff, reforms that allow the port to operate 24/7 have been a catalyst for several of its recorded results.

“This has created a synergy of action across all actors, including the Port of Conakry, police, gendarmerie, customs, and even the union of carriers.

“I dare to hope that we will stay the course of reforms for the prosperity of Guinea,” concludes Diallo. 🌐



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